Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council regarding non-availability of latest textile machinery and the exorbitant import duty on textile machinery; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) and (b) There have been representations from exporters, including synthetic & rayon textile exporters, for allowing imports of textile machinery at reduced rate of customs duty. A large number of sophisticated textile machineries are already allowed for import under concessional duty schemes linked with export obligation.

Rehabilitation of Handloom and Textile Workers

992. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what were the amounts provided in the Seventh Five Year Plan period for rehabilitation of workers of Textile mills, which were closed and the manner in which they were rehabilitated alongwith their number;

(b) what were the amounts provided in the Seventh Five Year Plan period for rehabilitation of handloom weavers displaced due to the completion of textile mills and powerlooms; and

(c) what was the manner in which the amount was spent for rehabilitation of displaced handloom weavers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Textile Workers' Rehabilitation Fund is a non-plan fund. However, during the period 1985—90, a sum of Rs. 63 crores were provided on this score. Under the scheme, affected workers are given relief for a period of 3 years on a tapering basis i.e. 75 per cent of the wage in the 1st year, 50 per cent in the 2nd year and 25 per cent of the wage in the 3rd year. Till 4th November, 1991, 19,993 workers have been given relief under the Scheme.

(a) Textile Workers' Dehabilitation Fund Scheme does not include the workers of Handloom Sectors as the Fund under this Scheme is for the workers of Organised Mill Sector.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Technical Assistance from UNDP for diversification of Jute Products

993. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the jute division of the United Nations Development Programme has offered to provide foreign technical know-how to promote Indian jute diversified products like blended viscose fabric and also to provide overseas research facilities for Indian Jute technologists;

(b) if so, what are details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to avail these facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (c) Ministry of Textiles in consultation with the Department of Economic Affairs are exploring the possibilities of securing UNDP assistance for implementation of a National Programme for Jute sector during the 8th Plan period. Currently the Programme Document is under preparation and this would include many components covering various aspects of jute development. After the formalities are gone through the extent of assistance as well as the specific area or component of assistance from UNDP will be decided.

Export of Textiles to U.S.A.

994. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken steps to increase export of textiles to U.S.A.;